

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested for the following reasons:

1. In the Drawings

Figure 1 has been corrected by deleting element "150" therefrom. Since element 150 is neither discussed in the specification nor recited in the claims, its removal from figure 1 is appropriate. Accordingly, acceptance of the correction to figure 1 is requested.

2. In the Abstract

A new abstract of the disclosure has been provided herewith which overcomes the objections noted in the Office Action and conforms to proper U.S. practice. Accordingly, acceptance of the new abstract of the disclosure is requested.

3. In the Specification

The specification has been amended to include sections headings, as enumerated in the Office Action. In addition, numerous other changes have been made to the specification in order to make the specification conform with the claim amendments and conform to U.S. practice. No new matter has been added to the specification and acceptance of the amendment to the specification is requested.

4. Rejection of claims 1-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,917,930 (Kayani et al.)

Claims 1-13 stand rejected as being anticipated by Kayani et al. For the reasons put forth below, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection by asserting that Kayani et al. is deficient in disclosing or suggesting the basic claimed method of claim 1 and the means of claim 7. Further, claims 2-6 and 8-13, which directly or indirectly depend

from either claim 1 or claim 7, are also patentable over Kayani et al. based in significant part on their individually recited elements and the distinction of claims 1 and 7 therefrom enumerated below.

a. Invention Distinguished

As recited in claim 1, the present invention relates to a method for processing sheet material in different successively processed groups. The method includes the following steps:

separating the different groups of sheet material, and

processing the separate groups of sheet material,

wherein a separator card is used for separating the different groups of sheet material, and at least one information carrier is used for processing the different groups of sheet material.

Furthermore, as recited in claim 7, the present invention also relates to a means for separating and processing different groups of sheet material in a sheet processing device, the means includes;

at least one separator card arranged to provide an indication of a separate group of sheet material to the sheet processing device; and

at least one information carrier arranged to provide information to the sheet processing device concerning a group of sheet material.

As is evident with both claims 1 and 7, common to each claim is either the use or inclusion of at least one separator card and at least one information carrier.

b. Reference Distinguished

While Kayani et al. and the present invention each disclose a separator card for separating groups of sheet material, the present invention differs from Kayani et al. on

the basis of an important particular. Specifically, Kayani et al. fails to disclose or suggest the separator card and the least one information carrier of the present invention that are used in combination for processing sheet material in different successively processed groups.

Kayani et al. discloses a method for processing sheet material by which different stacks of sheet material are separated by a separator card that includes information such as detailed account information or bar code information (col. 2, lines 62-66). Kayani et al. does not disclose or suggest separating the separator card and the information into at least a card and a carrier. Instead, as shown in Figs. 2 and 4 of Kayani et al., each separator card is clearly combined with information to form a single card that is identified with a particular group of sheet material.

In comparison to Kayani et al., the separator card and information carrier of the present invention are separate from one another. By providing a separator card separate from the information carrier, the present invention has the added benefit of permitting more than one information carrier to be used per group of sheet material. It follows that when processing a group of sheet material, the group can be further subdivided according to a predetermined relationship or arbitrary division by dividing the cards into sub-groups with the information carriers.

Accordingly, in view of the above-observations, Kayani et al. fails disclose or suggest, the use or inclusion of at least one separator card and at least one information carrier when processing sheet material in different successively processed groups. It follows that Kayani et al. cannot be construed to anticipate claims 1-13. As a result, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

Application No. 09/718,473
Examiner: K. NGUYEN
Art Unit: 2876

5. Conclusion

In view of the amended claims and foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that claims 1-13 be allowed and the application be passed to issue.

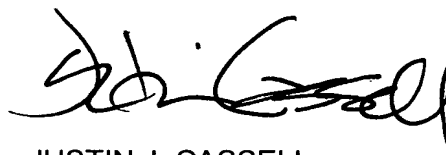
If any issues remain that may be resolved by a telephone or facsimile communication with the Applicants' Attorney, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the numbers shown below.

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Date: January 3, 2003

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin J. Cassell", written in a cursive style.

JUSTIN J. CASSELL
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APPENDIX OF MARKED-UP SPECIFICATION

Page 1, lines 5-22 (second paragraph), please amend this paragraph as follows:

A method and bank note processing machine for processing different groups of bank notes are known for example from JP 62-82493A. The different groups of bank notes correspond to deposits by different depositors which are separated by separator cards. The separator cards are inserted between the different deposits to separate them. The separator cards may be disposed at the beginning, the end or the beginning and end of the group of bank notes forming the particular deposit. The separator cards may contain information, for example, about the depositor and/or the deposit. Further, the separator cards are designed so as to be recognized automatically by the bank note processing machine during processing. When a separator card is recognized, the bank note processing machine can enter in the books the associated group of bank notes for the corresponding deposit or depositor. For recognizing the separator cards, the bank note processing machine has magnetic sensors which, on the one hand, are used for reading the information coded on a magnetic stripe on the separator cards. On the other hand, the signals of the sensors can be used to recognize the separator cards even when the latter are masked by bank notes, as may occur upon multiple removal [for example]. Thus it is ensured with relatively high probability that the separator cards are always recognized, so that at least the boundaries between individual deposits can be recognized.--

Page 7, lines 1-18, please amend these paragraphs as follows:

Figure 2 shows a first deposit consisting of separating means *TK1*, bank notes *BN1* to *BN6* and one information [means] carrier *IK* located between bank notes *BN2* and *BN3*.

Figure 3 shows a second deposit consisting of separating means *TK2*, bank notes *BN7* to *BN12* [*BK12*] and two information [means] carriers *IK2* and *IK3*.

Figure 4 shows a third deposit consisting of separating means *TK4*, bank notes *BN13* to *BN15* and one information [means] carriers *IK4*. Information [means] carriers *IK4* is followed by a further deposit shown by separating means *TK5* and a dotted line in Figure 4.

Separating means *TK1* to *TK5* can be formed as separator cards, as shown in Figure 2 to 4. Separating means *TK1* to *TK5* are recognized by sensor device 112 with reference to specific properties, as described.

Information [means] carriers *IK1* to *IK4* formed as information cards bear information, as described above. Separating means *TK1* to *TK5* serve only to separate the different deposits, whereas information cards *IK1* to *IK4* are used to provide the information required for processing. Information cards *IK1* to *IK4* may be of simple design, in particular they lack the special properties of separating means *TK1* to *TK5*. This permits corresponding information [means] cards *IK1* to *IK4* to be already prepared and provided with the desired information by the depositor making the particular deposit.

APPENDIX OF MARKED-UP VERSION OF CLAIMS

1. (Amended) A method for processing sheet material[, in particular papers of value such as bank notes, checks, etc., by which] in different successively processed groups[of sheet material are processed successively], comprising the following method steps:

separating the different groups of sheet material, and
processing the separate groups of sheet material,
wherein a [separating means] separator card (TK) is used for separating the different groups of sheet material, and at least one information [means] carrier (IK) is used for processing the different groups of sheet material.

2. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the information [means] carrier (IK) is/are inserted at any points within the different groups of sheet material.

3. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the [separating means] separator card (TK) is inserted at the beginning of each different group of sheet material, and the information [means] carrier (IK) is inserted at the end of each different group of sheet material.

4. (Amended) A method according to claim 1 or 3, wherein subgroups of sheet material are formed by using a plurality of information [means] carriers (IK) within a group of sheet material.

5. (Twice Amended) A method according to any one of claims 1, 2 or 3, wherein the [separating means] separator card (TK) and the information [means] carrier (IK) are brought together with the groups of sheet material at different places.

6. (Twice Amended) A method according to any one of claims 1, 2 or 3, wherein a deliverer of one or more groups of sheet material provides the information [means] carrier (IK) with information.

7. (Amended) Means for separating and processing different groups of sheet material in a sheet processing device, [in particular papers of value such as bank notes, checks, etc., for separate processing of the sheet material of the different groups, wherein] the means comprising:

at least one [separating means] separator card (TK) arranged to provide an indication of a separate group of sheet material to the sheet processing device; and

at least one information [means] carrier (IK) arranged to provide information to the sheet processing device concerning a group of sheet material [are provided for each group of sheet material].

8. (Amended) Means [for separating different groups of sheet material] according to claim 7, wherein the [separating means] separator card (TK) and/or the information [means] carrier (IK) are coded.

9. (Amended) Means [for separating different groups of sheet material] according to claim 8, wherein the coding of the [separating means] separator card (TK) and/or the information [means] carrier (IK) comprise a magnetic and/or optical and/or electric and/or electronic coding.

10. (Twice Amended) Means [for separating different groups of sheet material] according to one of claims 7 to 9, wherein the at least one information [means] carrier (IK) is/are formed by part of the sheet material.

11. (Amended) A method according to claim 4, wherein the [separating means] separator card (TK) and the information [means] carrier (IK) are brought together with the groups of sheet material at different places.

12. (Amended) A method according to claim 4, wherein a deliverer of one or more groups of sheet material provides the information [means] carrier (IK) with information.

13. (Amended) A method according to claim 5, wherein a deliverer of one or more groups of sheet material provides the information [means] carrier (IK) with information.

APPENDIX OF CLEAN VERSION OF CLAIMS

1. (Amended) A method for processing sheet material in different successively processed groups, comprising the following method steps:
separating the different groups of sheet material, and
processing the separate groups of sheet material,
wherein a separator card (*TK*) is used for separating the different groups of sheet material, and at least one information carrier (*IK*) is used for processing the different groups of sheet material.
2. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the information carrier (*IK*) is/are inserted at any points within the different groups of sheet material.
3. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the separator card (*TK*) is inserted at the beginning of each different group of sheet material, and the information carrier (*IK*) is inserted at the end of each different group of sheet material.
4. (Amended) A method according to claim 1 or 3, wherein subgroups of sheet material are formed by using a plurality of information carriers (*IK*) within a group of sheet material.
5. (Twice Amended) A method according to any one of claims 1, 2 or 3, wherein the separator card (*TK*) and the information carrier (*IK*) are brought together with the groups of sheet material at different places.
6. (Twice Amended) A method according to any one of claims 1, 2 or 3, wherein a deliverer of one or more groups of sheet material provides the information carrier (*IK*) with information.

7. (Amended) Means for separating and processing different groups of sheet material in a sheet processing device, the means comprising;

at least one separator card (*TK*) arranged to provide an indication of a separate group of sheet material to the sheet processing device; and

at least one information carrier (*IK*) arranged to provide information to the sheet processing device concerning a group of sheet material.

8. (Amended) Means according to claim 7, wherein the separator card (*TK*) and/or the information carrier (*IK*) are coded.

9. (Amended) Means according to claim 8, wherein the coding of the separator card (*TK*) and/or the information carrier (*IK*) comprise a magnetic and/or optical and/or electric and/or electronic coding.

10. (Twice Amended) Means according to one of claims 7 to 9, wherein the at least one information carrier (*IK*) is/are formed by part of the sheet material.

11. (Amended) A method according to claim 4, wherein the separator card (*TK*) and the information carrier (*IK*) are brought together with the groups of sheet material at different places.

12. (Amended) A method according to claim 4, wherein a deliverer of one or more groups of sheet material provides the information carrier (*IK*) with information.

13. (Amended) A method according to claim 5, wherein a deliverer of one or more groups of sheet material provides the information carrier (*IK*) with information.

[Abstract

ORIGINAL INVENTION -
Application No. 09/718,473
Steinbocker et al.
09/718,473

The present invention relates to a method for processing sheet material, in particular papers of value such as bank notes, checks, etc., by which different groups of sheet material are processed successively, the different groups of sheet material being separated for processing.

It is proposed that not only a strict separating means but also at least one information means be used for separating and processing each group of sheet material. The separating means thus serves only to separate the individual groups of sheet material from each other, whereas the information means is used for providing information about the particular group of sheet material for processing.

(Fig. 2)]

